Post Herald

Libel Action Cost 'Look' $75,000-Plus

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 14 (AP) — Look Magazine said Friday the cost of defending against Mayor Joseph L. Alioto's 12.5 million libel suit has caused it to refrain from other stories which "questioned the qualifications of public officials."

Such stories "would expose Look to substantial expense in successfully defending libel actions," the magazine said in a motion asking dismissal of Alioto's suit.

The mayor sued Look after it published a Sept. 23, 1969, article entitled, "The Wed That Links San Francisco's Mayor Alioto and the Mafia." The first trial of Alioto's suit ended in a hung jury.

U.S. District Court Judge Russell E. Smith of Missoula, Mont., assigned to the retrial scheduled Dec. 1, will hear the new Look dismissal motion Monday in San Francisco.

Look's chief attorney, Ronald S. Diana, told the court in an affidavit that the magazine was prepared to publish an article related to organized crime and legitimate business in the East until he advised the editors to set aside a $50,000 legal defense fund in case of a libel suit.

Another Look attorney, Charles Kenady of San Francisco, said the magazine spent $75,000, not including attorney fees, for 6,000 hours of legal services up to July 1, none of it covered by libel insurance.